General Assembly

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Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 28

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/57/L.53 and Add.1)*]

57/159. Assistance in mine action

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 48/7 of 19 October 1993, 49/215 of 23 December 1994, 50/82 of 14 December 1995, 51/149 of 13 December 1996 and 52/173 of 18 December 1997, on assistance in mine clearance, and its resolutions 53/26 of 17 November 1998, 54/191 of 17 December 1999, 55/120 of 6 December 2000 and 56/219 of 21 December 2001, on assistance in mine action, all adopted without a vote,

Recognizing that, in addition to the primary role of States, the United Nations has a significant role to play in the field of assistance in mine action, and considering mine action to be an important and integrated component of United Nations humanitarian and development activities,

Reaffirming its deep concern at the tremendous humanitarian and development problems caused by the presence of mines and other unexploded ordnance that constitute an obstacle to the return of refugees and other displaced persons, to humanitarian aid operations and to reconstruction and economic development, as well as to the restoration of normal social conditions, and that have serious and lasting social and economic consequences for the populations of mine-affected countries,

Bearing in mind the serious threat that mines and other unexploded ordnance pose to the safety, health and lives of local civilian populations, as well as of personnel participating in humanitarian, peacekeeping and rehabilitation programmes and operations,

Encouraged by the reduction in the number of new mine victims, but reiterating its dismay at the existing high number of victims of mines and other unexploded ordnance, especially among civilian populations, including women and children, and recalling in this context Commission on Human Rights resolutions 1995/79 of 8 March 1995,[1] 1996/85 of 24 April 1996,[2] 1997/78 of 18 April 1997,[3]

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[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 3* and corrigenda (E/1995/23 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. II, sect. A.

[2] Ibid., *1996, Supplement No. 3* and corrigendum (E/1996/23 and Corr.1), chap. II, sect. A.

[3] Ibid., *1997, Supplement No. 3* (E/1997/23), chap. II, sect. A.

1998/76 of 22 April 1998,[4] 1999/80 of 28 April 1999,[5] 2000/85 of 27 April 2000,[6] 2001/75 of 25 April 2001[7] and 2002/92 of 26 April 2002[8] on the rights of the child, and resolutions 1996/27 of 19 April 1996,[2] 1998/31 of 17 April 1998,[4] 2000/51 of 25 April 2000[6] and 2002/61 of 25 April 2002[8] and decision 1997/107 of 11 April 1997,[9] on the human rights of persons with disabilities,

Deeply alarmed by the number of mines that continue to be laid each year, as well as the presence of a decreasing but still very large number of mines and other unexploded ordnance as a result of armed conflicts, and therefore remaining convinced of the necessity and urgency of a significant increase in mine-clearance efforts by the international community with a view to eliminating the threat of landmines to civilians as soon as possible,

Noting the inclusion in Amended Protocol II[10] to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects[11] of a number of provisions of importance for mine-clearance operations, notably the requirement of detectability, and provision of information and technical and material assistance necessary to remove or otherwise render ineffective minefields, mines and booby traps, and noting also that Amended Protocol II to the Convention entered into force on 3 December 1998,

Noting also the conclusions and recommendations adopted at the Third Annual Conference of the States Parties to Amended Protocol II to the Convention, held in Geneva on 10 December 2001,[12]

Recalling that the States parties at the Second Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention decided to explore further the issue of mines other than anti-personnel mines, the effects of explosive remnants of wars and possible measures which could reduce the risk of casualties among civilian populations and humanitarian problems after conflicts,

Noting that additional States have ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction,[13] which entered into force on 1 March 1999, bringing the total number of States that have formally accepted the obligations therein to one hundred and thirty,

Noting also the conclusions of the Fourth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention, held in Geneva from 16 to 20 September 2002,[14] taking note of the reaffirmed commitments that were made, among other things, to intensify further the efforts in those areas most directly related to the core humanitarian objectives of the

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[4] Ibid., *1998, Supplement No. 3* (E/1998/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[5] Ibid., *1999, Supplement No. 3* (E/1999/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[6] Ibid., *2000, Supplement No. 3* and corrigendum (E/2000/23 and Corr.1), chap. II, sect. A.

[7] Ibid., *2001, Supplement No. 3* (E/2001/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[8] Ibid., *2002, Supplement No. 3* (E/2002/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[9] Ibid., *1997, Supplement No. 3* (E/1997/23), chap. II, sect. B.

[10] CCW/CONF.I/16 (Part I), annex B.

[11] See *The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, vol. 5: 1980 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.81.IX.4), appendix VII.

[12] See CCW/AP.II/CONF.3/4 (Part I) and Corr.1 and 2.

[13] See CD/1478.

[14] See APLC/MSP.4/2002/1.

Convention, to provide assistance for mine clearance and rehabilitation, the social and economic reintegration of mine victims and mine-risk education programmes and to eradicate anti-personnel mines, and taking note of the work of the intersessional programme established by States parties to the Convention,

Stressing the need to convince mine-affected States to halt new deployments of anti-personnel mines in order to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of mine-clearance operations,

Stressing also the need to convince non-State actors to halt immediately and unconditionally new deployments of anti-personnel mines,

Recognizing the importance of assisting mine clearance in mine-affected countries by ensuring that the necessary maps and information and appropriate technical and material assistance are provided to help to remove existing minefields, mines, booby traps and other unexploded ordnance,

Noting that the resources allocated to mine clearance and other mine-action activities have increased in recent years, but stressing the need to mobilize additional resources to meet increasing requirements, and encouraging all States, the United Nations and other international, regional and non-governmental organizations to continue their efforts in this regard,

Concerned at the limited availability of safe and cost-effective mine-detection and mine-clearance equipment, as well as the need for effective global coordination in research and development to improve the relevant technology, and conscious of the need to promote further and more rapid progress in this field and to foster international, national and local technical cooperation to that end,

Reaffirming the need to reinforce international and regional cooperation and coordination in the area of mine action and to devote the necessary resources to that end, including resources to support national and regional capacity-building initiatives, where applicable, and the work of the United Nations in that regard,

Welcoming the various established mine-action coordination centres, as well as the creation and existence of international trust funds for mine clearance and other mine-action activities,

Noting with satisfaction the inclusion in the mandates of several peacekeeping operations of provisions relating to mine-action work carried out under the direction of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat, in the context of such operations,

Commending the action taken by donor and recipient Governments, the United Nations system, the International Committee of the Red Cross and non-governmental organizations to coordinate their efforts and seek solutions to the problems related to the presence of mines and other unexploded ordnance, as well as their assistance to victims of mines,

Welcoming the role of the Secretary-General in increasing public awareness of the problem of landmines,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General;[15]

2. *Calls*, in particular, for the continuation of the efforts of States, with the assistance of the United Nations and institutions as appropriate, to foster the establishment and development of national mine-action capacities in countries in which mines constitute a serious threat to the safety, health and lives of the local population or an impediment to social and economic development efforts at the national and local levels, and urges all Member States, in particular those that have the capacity to do so, to assist mine-affected countries in the establishment and development of national capacities in mine clearance, mine awareness and victim assistance;

3. *Invites* Member States to develop and support national programmes, where appropriate in cooperation with the relevant bodies of the United Nations system and relevant regional, governmental and non-governmental organizations, to promote awareness of landmines, including among women and children;

4. *Expresses its appreciation* to Governments, regional organizations and other donors for their financial and in-kind contributions to mine action, including contributions for emergency operations and for national and local capacity-building programmes;

5. *Appeals* to Governments, regional organizations and other donors to continue and, whenever possible, increase their support to mine action through further contributions, including contributions through the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action, to allow for the timely delivery of mine-action assistance in emergency situations, and stresses that such assistance should be integrated into broader humanitarian and other strategies;

6. *Stresses* the importance of international support for emergency assistance to victims of mines and other unexploded ordnance and for the care, rehabilitation and social and economic reintegration of the victims, and also stresses that such assistance should be integrated into broader public health and socio-economic strategies;

7. *Encourages* the finalization of an emergency response plan by the United Nations to respond to emergency mine-action requirements, and emphasizes the need for that plan to build upon all existing capacities;

8. *Encourages* all relevant multilateral and national programmes and bodies to include, in coordination with the United Nations, activities related to mine action in their humanitarian, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development assistance activities, where appropriate, bearing in mind the need to ensure national and local ownership, sustainability and capacity-building;

9. *Encourages* Governments, relevant United Nations bodies and other donors to take further action to promote gender- and age-appropriate mine-risk education programmes, victim assistance and child-centred rehabilitation, thereby reducing the number of child victims and relieving their plight;

10. *Stresses* the importance of cooperation and coordination in mine action, while emphasizing once again the important role of the United Nations in the effective coordination of mine-action activities, based on the United Nations policy

[15] A/57/430.

on mine action and effective coordination,[16] and especially the role of the Mine Action Service, stresses also the important role that national authorities and regional organizations can play in this regard, and underlines the need for the continuous assessment of these roles by the General Assembly;

11. *Emphasizes* the role of the Mine Action Service as the focal point for mine action within the United Nations system and its ongoing collaboration with and coordination of all mine-related activities of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and in this regard expresses its appreciation of the roles played by other bodies of the United Nations system, in accordance with United Nations mine-action policy;

12. *Notes with appreciation* the implementation of the United Nations mine-action strategy for the period 2001–2005 developed by the Secretary-General,[17] and requests him to review it formally by further seeking and taking into account the views of Member States and taking into consideration the impact of the landmine problem on rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, in order to ensure the effectiveness of assistance in mine action by the United Nations;

13. *Emphasizes* the importance of undertaking further multisectoral assessments and surveys to better define the nature, scope and impact of the landmine problem in affected countries and to support the establishment of clear priorities and national plans of action, notes with appreciation the ongoing development by the United Nations of the International Mine Action Standards, with the assistance of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining and other partners in mine action, to support the safe and effective conduct of mine-action activities, emphasizes the need for an inclusive process to be followed in the development and review of such standards, and encourages the Secretary-General to circulate the completed standards as a United Nations document to all Member States;

14. *Takes note with appreciation* of the information management policy for mine action submitted by the Secretary-General,[18] and emphasizes in this context the importance of developing and maintaining a comprehensive information management system for mine action, following an inclusive and continuous improvement process, under the overall coordination of the Mine Action Service and with the instrumental support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, in order to facilitate the coordination of field activities and the setting of priorities therein;

15. *Requests* the Mine Action Service to develop further the electronic mine information network as a user-friendly repository of mine-related information and as a means for mine-action programmes to circulate on a regular basis to donors and other partners standard reports on the scope and impact of the mine problem, available mine-action resources and capacities and the progress achieved in the field;

16. *Urges* Member States and regional, governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations to continue to extend full assistance and cooperation to the Secretary-General and, in particular, to provide him with information and

[16] A/53/496, annex II.

[17] See A/56/448 and Add.1 and 2.

[18] See A/56/448/Add.2.

data, as well as other appropriate resources that could be useful in strengthening the coordination role of the United Nations in mine action;

17. *Emphasizes* in this regard the importance of recording the location of mines, of retaining all such records and making them available to concerned parties upon cessation of hostilities, and welcomes the strengthening of the relevant provisions in international law;

18. *Calls upon* Member States, especially those that have the capacity to do so, to provide the necessary information and technical, financial and material assistance, as appropriate, and to locate, remove, destroy or otherwise render ineffective minefields, mines, booby traps and other devices, in accordance with international law, as soon as possible;

19. *Recognizes* the importance of the various mine-action coordination centres, encourages the further establishment of such centres, including those supported by the United Nations Development Programme or under the auspices of the Mine Action Service, especially in emergency situations, and encourages States to support the activities of those centres and the trust funds established for the coordination and promotion of assistance in mine action;

20. *Urges* Member States and regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations that have the ability to do so to provide, as appropriate, technological assistance to mine-affected countries and to promote user-oriented scientific research and development on mine-action techniques and technology, within reasonable time frames, so that mine-action activities may be carried out more effectively at lower costs and through safer means and to promote international and local collaboration in this regard;

21. *Encourages* Member States and regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations to continue to support ongoing activities to promote appropriate technology, as well as international operational and safety standards for mine-action activities;

22. *Takes note with appreciation* of the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General to study ways and means of increasing public awareness of the impact of the problem of landmines and other unexploded ordnance on affected countries and the presentation of options to this effect to the General Assembly;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session a report on the progress achieved on all relevant issues outlined both in his previous reports to the Assembly on assistance in mine clearance and mine action and in the present resolution, including the progress made by the International Committee of the Red Cross and other international and regional organizations as well as national programmes, and on the operation of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action and other mine-action programmes;

24. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the item entitled "Assistance in mine action".

76th plenary meeting
16 December 2002

General Assembly

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4 March 2003

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 38

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/57/L.20/Rev.1 and Add.1)*]

57/160. The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming all its relevant resolutions in which it stresses the importance of international economic, financial and technical cooperation and assistance, both bilateral and multilateral, aimed at promoting economic and social development in the region with a view to furthering and supplementing the efforts of the Central American peoples and Governments to consolidate peace and democracy,

Reaffirming also its resolution 52/169 G of 16 December 1997, concerning international assistance to and cooperation with the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America, and the relevant resolutions concerning emergency assistance to the Central American countries as a consequence of the destruction caused by natural disasters,

Taking note of the peaceful and orderly elections held during the past year in Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua, and emphasizing the existence throughout Central America of freely elected Governments, indicating the achievement of political, economic and social changes that are creating a climate conducive to the promotion of economic growth and advancement towards the consolidation and further development of democratic, just and equitable societies,

Emphasizing the importance of the Central American Integration System, the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America, the establishment of the subsystem and of the regional social policy, the model of democratic Central American security, and the implementation of other agreements adopted at the presidential summit meetings,

Recognizing that the consolidation of peace and democracy in Central America is the outcome of a long and arduous process in which obstacles have been encountered but are being overcome through the efforts of the peoples and Governments of the region aimed at continuing progress in the strengthening of peace and democratic institutions,

Noting that in 2002, on the tenth anniversary of the signature of the El Salvador peace agreements, additional steps have been taken towards the

successful implementation of the commitments, enabling the completion of the verification work entrusted to the Secretary-General,

Noting with concern that the progress achieved in previous years in the fulfilment of the commitments contained in the Guatemala peace agreements has not maintained the same momentum during the period 2001–2002 and in some aspects has even been reversed,

Recognizing the establishment of offices of human rights defenders throughout Central America and the progress achieved in the field of human rights, which is being supported by public education campaigns to highlight both the responsibilities of States in the field of human rights and the rights and responsibilities of citizens,

Noting with concern the deterioration in the Central American economies, due, inter alia, to an unfavourable international economic climate and the fall in exports, as well as the adverse effects on the efforts of the peoples and Governments of the region to achieve sustainable economic development, and underlining the need for economic reforms,

Noting with concern also that Central America is highly vulnerable to natural disasters and that some countries have not yet been able to overcome the devastating effects of hurricanes Mitch, Keith and Michelle, the earthquakes in El Salvador in January 2001 and the drought that afflicted the entire region in 2001,

Noting that the natural disasters have proved the relevance of environmentally responsible economic and development policies and the need for the Central American nations to consider environmental aspects among all their development objectives,

Bearing in mind the efforts made by the Central American Governments to reduce the risks and mitigate the consequences of the natural disasters in the region, including the adoption of the Strategic Framework for the Reduction of Vulnerability and Disasters in Central America and the Central American Five-Year Plan for the Reduction of Vulnerability to and the Impact of Disasters, 2000 to 2004,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central America;[1]

2. *Commends* the efforts of the peoples and the Governments of the Central American countries to consolidate peace and democracy and promote sustainable development by implementing the commitments adopted at the summit meetings in the region;

3. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the firm determination shown by the Central American Governments to resolve their differences peacefully, thereby avoiding any setback in efforts to consolidate peace, further the process of Central American integration and guarantee the sustainable development of the region;

4. *Urges* the Central American nations to continue to work together to resolve border issues for the greater good of the region and its inhabitants;

5. *Draws attention* to the convening of the Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons in Central America: Control and Regulation of Weapons Transfers in Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action, held in San José from 3 to 5 December 2001, and welcomes the adoption of a plan of activities

[1] A/57/384 and Add.1.

recommended for the national and regional implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects;[2]

6. *Recognizes* the importance of the process of Central American integration, and urges Member States to continue combining efforts to adapt, strengthen and promote even further the Central American integration process, especially in economic, social, cultural and tourism fields, and recalling the Declaration regarding a South American Zone of Peace and Cooperation,[3] appeals to the international community to continue supporting that process in order to contribute to the peace, security and sustainable development of the region;

7. *Reaffirms* the importance of the Puebla-Panama Plan as a means of promoting the economic and social development of the Mesoamerican region, recognizes in that connection the process made in implementing the Plan, and invites the friendly countries of the Mesoamerican region, international agencies and international businessmen and investors to support the Mesoamerican countries in the implementation of the projects prioritized in the Plan;

8. *Welcomes* the Mérida Joint Declaration adopted on 28 June 2002 at the Fifth Summit of the Tuxtla Mechanism for Dialogue and Coordination, in which the heads of State and Government of Central America and Mexico expressed their firm commitment to promote deep regional integration through the consolidation of a community of Mesoamerican nations;

9. *Recognizes* the importance of the Conference on Information and Communications Technology and Electronic Government for Regional Development and Integration for Central America, convened at Tegucigalpa on 20 November 2002, and, with a view to garnering greater support, requests the United Nations Secretariat to continue rendering support in the areas of information and communications technology and electronic government for the regional development of Central America;

10. *Reiterates* the importance of negotiating trade agreements between the region and its counterparts outside the region with a view to promoting the sustainability of the economic development of the region;

11. *Calls upon* the Central American Governments to continue to fulfil the commitments they have assumed under national, regional and international agreements with a view to enhancing governance in the region, especially in the promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of social programmes designed to overcome poverty and unemployment, improve public safety, strengthen the judiciary, consolidate a modern and transparent public administration and eliminate corruption;

12. *Urges* the Central American Governments to redouble their efforts to combat common crime and transnational organized crime with a view to providing greater security for inhabitants and their property, within a framework of full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

13. *Recognizes* the progress achieved in the consolidation of a Mesoamerican biological corridor as a system of territorial classification, comprising natural areas

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[2] See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, New York, 9–20 July 2001* (A/CONF.192/15), chap. IV.

[3] See A/57/232, annex, enclosure.

under special administrative regimes, multi-use areas and interconnecting areas in order to contribute to improving the quality of life of the inhabitants of the region;

14. *Reiterates its appreciation* to the people and the Government of El Salvador for their efforts in fulfilling the commitments set forth in the peace agreements, and expresses its profound thanks to the Secretary-General for the commendable way in which he has carried out the verification work entrusted to him, and to the international community for the support it has rendered in order to achieve the objectives of the peace process in El Salvador;

15. *Urges* all Guatemalans, and in particular the Government of Guatemala, to give renewed impetus to the fulfilment of the commitments contained in the peace agreements, in the context of reprogramming for the period 2001–2004, and to the understanding reached during the meeting of the Consultative Group for Guatemala, organized by the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C., on 11 and 12 February 2002;

16. *Reiterates* the need to implement fully the commitments set forth in the Guatemala peace agreements, in particular the recommendations of the Commission for Historical Clarification,[4] and urges all sectors of society to combine efforts and to work with determination to consolidate peace;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, the relevant bodies and programmes of the United Nations system and the international community to continue to support and verify the implementation of the Guatemala peace agreements signed under United Nations auspices, and to consider the implementation of the peace agreements as the framework for their technical and financial assistance programmes and projects in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Guatemala;

18. *Recognizes* the need to continue to follow closely the situation in Central America in support of national and regional efforts to overcome the underlying causes that have led to armed conflicts, avoid setbacks and consolidate peace and democracy in the region, as well as promote the objectives of the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America;

19. *Commends* the efforts and actions undertaken by the present Government of Nicaragua to combat the scourge of corruption, which threatens to undermine the legitimacy of public institutions in that country, and urges it to continue its actions until that evil has been eradicated, thereby strengthening confidence in the rule of law and the belief of the Nicaraguan people in democracy;

20. *Reaffirms* the importance of international cooperation, in particular cooperation with the bodies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and the donor community in the consolidation of democracy and sustainable development in Central America, and urges them to continue to support Central American efforts to achieve those objectives;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to lend his fullest support to the initiatives and activities of the Central American Governments, in particular their efforts to consolidate democracy through the promotion of integration and the implementation of the comprehensive sustainable development programme, emphasizing, inter alia, the potential repercussions of natural disasters on the

[4] See A/53/928, annex.

vulnerable economies and political systems of the region, and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

22. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session an item entitled "The situation in Central America: progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development".

76th plenary meeting
16 December 2002